

REMARKS

Claim 7 has been canceled without prejudice. Claim 6 has been amended. New claim 37 has been added. Claims 6, 8-11 and 37 are pending in the present application. Reexamination and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Independent claim 6 stands rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by USP 6,360,761 to Zheng ("Zheng '761"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.


Claim 6 has been amended to recite that the four panels are connected together to form a ring of panels that define a space therebetween, with an item of furniture positioned in the space. In contrast, Zheng '761 does not teach or suggest an assembly where a plurality of panels defines a space that receives an item of furniture.

The Examiner stated with respect to claim 7 that it would be obvious to "modify the device of Zheng '761 by positioning a solid object in the enclosed space in order to utilize the ring of panels to hide the solid object". However, Applicant respectfully submits that it would not be possible to modify any of the embodiments in Zheng '761 to receive an item of furniture. Specifically, the structures in FIGS. 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 of Zheng '761 all have a base or bottom panel, and it would not be feasible to place an item of furniture on top of the bottom panel because doing so might damage the bottom panel. In addition, there would be no reason or incentive for the modification because none of the structures in FIGS. 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 of Zheng '761 would be able to "hide" the item of furniture. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 6 is allowable over Zheng '761, and claims 8-11 and 37 depending therefrom are also allowable over Zheng '761.

To further highlight the distinction between the claimed assembly and Zheng '761, new claim 37 recites that the four panels are oriented vertically to form the ring of panels that define the space therebetween. In contrast, two of the panels B and D in FIG. 5 of Zheng '761 that have been relied upon by the Examiner on page 5 of the Office Action are oriented horizontally. Thus, claim 37 is submitted to define additional allowable subject matter.

In light of the above, allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if there are any informal matters that can be resolved in a phone conversation, or if the Examiner has any suggestions or ideas that would further advance the prosecution of this case.

Respectfully Submitted,


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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this paper is being deposited with the United States Postal service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on the date shown below.

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